



**EXTRAORDINARY MEETING  
OF BIRMINGHAM CITY  
COUNCIL, THURSDAY, 12  
OCTOBER 2023**

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF BIRMINGHAM  
CITY COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2023 AT 1730  
HOURS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL HOUSE,  
BIRMINGHAM**

**PRESENT:-** Lord Mayor (Councillor Chaman Lal) in the Chair.

**Councillors**

Saima Ahmed	Deirdre Alden	Robert Alden
Gurdial Singh Atwal	Raqeeb Aziz	Shabina Bano
David Barker	David Barrie	Baber Baz
Jilly Bermingham	Sir Albert Bore	Nicky Brennan
Kerry Brewer	Marje Bridle	Martin Brooks
Zaker Choudhry	Debbie Clancy	Liz Clements
Maureen Cornish	John Cotton	Phil Davis
Jack Deakin	Adrian Delaney	Diane Donaldson
Jayne Francis	Sam Forsyth	Ray Goodwin
Rob Grant	Colin Green	Roger Harmer
Deborah Harries	Kath Hartley	Adam Higgs
Des Hughes	Jon Hunt	Mahmood Hussain
Shabrana Hussain	Timothy Huxtable	Mohammed Idrees
Zafar Iqbal	Katherine Iroh	Ziaul Islam
Morriam Jan	Kerry Jenkins	Meirion Jenkins
Brigid Jones	Jane Jones	Amar Khan
Ayoub Khan	Mariam Khan	Saqib Khan
Izzy Knowles	Narinder Kaur Kooner	Bruce Lines
Mary Locke	Ewan Mackey	Basharat Mahmood
Majid Mahmood	Rashad Mahmood	Karen McCarthy
Saddak Miah	Shehla Moledina	Gareth Moore
Yvonne Mosquito	Richard Parkin	David Pears
Miranda Perks	Rob Pocock	Julien Pritchard
Lauren Rainbow	Darius Sandhu	Shafique Shah
Rinkal Shergill	Sybil Spence	Saima Suleman
Jamie Tennant	Sharon Thompson	Paul Tilsley
Lisa Trickett	Penny Wagg	Ken Wood
Alex Yip	Waseem Zaffar	Matt Bennett
Marcus Bernasconi		

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### **NOTICE OF RECORDING**

- 187 The Lord Mayor advised that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcasting via the Council's Public-I website and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.
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### **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

- 188 The Lord Mayor reminded Members that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests relating to any items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

There were no declarations of interests made.

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### **RESPONSE TO STATUTORY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EXTERNAL AUDITORS, GRANT THORNTON**

A joint report of Deborah Cadman, Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council, Councillor John Cotton was submitted (See document No. 1, agenda item 4).

The Lord Mayor proposed that standing orders be suspended for this agenda item to enable the External Auditors to directly address the Council. The suspension of standing orders would also provide Group Leaders with an opportunity to speak as well as giving other Members the opportunity to speak. This was seconded and agreed.

The Lord Mayor invited both John Roberts and Mark Stocks from Grant Thornton UK LLP, to address the Council. They had been allocated 10 minutes to speak.

Members noted the comments and points made during the presentation from Mark Stocks and John Roberts.

Councillor John Cotton addressed the Council to move the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Councillor Cotton informed the Council that the Labour Group accepted the recommendations set out in the report.

Councillor Cotton further informed the Council of the work being undertaken to address the recommendations outlined in the report.

Councillor Cotton highlighted certain elements of the report which he did not

agree with and queried why other occurrences had not been included in the final version of the report.

Councillor Cotton emphasised the importance of collaborative working between Members, officers and the external auditors moving forwards.

Councillor Robert Alden addressed the Council to second the report.

Councillor Robert Alden expressed concern that the Leader of the Council was asking Council to vote for a report which he had previously stated was factually incorrect (as referenced during his moving of the recommendations).

Council noted Councillor Robert Alden's concerns around the continuing costs being incurred by the Council due to the delays associated with the implementation of a job evaluation scheme.

Councillor Robert Alden highlighted concerns around the Labour Member/officer relationships at the Council, specifically citing where the Local Government Association had been used to mediate conversations between the Labour Group and the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer.

Further concerns were also raised in relation to requested information having not previously been provided to the External Auditors.

Councillor Roger Harmer addressed the Council and highlighted the sobering nature of the report.

Whilst Councillor Harmer acknowledged Councillor Cotton's comments around elements of the report which he deemed as not factually accurate, Councillor Harmer raised concerns around the financial liabilities associated with equal pay and the Oracle system.

Councillor Harmer expressed further concerns relating to the in-year budget savings which were not likely to be achieved as part of the 2023/24 budget which was agreed in February 2023.

Councillor Harmer expressed a view that significant work would be required if the deadline of April 2025 in relation to an agreement on equal pay would be met.

The Lord Mayor proposed that a short break be taken until 1845. This was seconded and agreed.

The meeting reconvened at 1845.

Councillor Robert Alden proposed that the meeting be extended by 30 minutes to enable additional speakers to participate in the meeting. This was seconded and agreed.

Councillor Julien Pritchard addressed the meeting and expressed concern at the Member/officer relationships at the Council.

Councillor Pritchard was unsure in relation to how Oracle would reach the required compliance level by the end of November 2023.

Councillor Pritchard was unsure as to how the issues flagged in the report would precisely affect the 2023/24 budget and so could not be confident in terms of the figures contained within it.

Councillor Pritchard expressed concern in relation to the potential impact on communities as cuts to services commenced as part of the savings targets which needed to be realised.

A debate ensued.

Councillors Sir Albert Bore, Morriam Jan, Meirion Jenkins, Lisa Trickett, Matt Bennett, Rob Pocock, Deirdre Alden, Majid Mahmood and Councillor Zaker Choudhry spoke during the debate.

Councillor Kerry Jenkins proposed that the question be put. This was seconded and agreed.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor John Cotton indicated that he did not wish to respond to the debate.

A named vote was then called by the Lord Mayor in respect of the recommendations outlined in the report. The Chamber doors were locked.

Here upon a poll being demanded the voting was as follows:-

#### **For the Recommendations (77)**

Robert Alden	Deirdre Alden	Rick Payne
Adam Higgs	David Barrie	Matt Bennett
Darius Sandhu	Kerry Brewer	Timothy Huxtable
Alex Yip	Debbie Clancy	Bruce Lines
Richard Parkin	Ewan Mackey	Gareth Moore
Adrian Delaney	Ken Wood	Meirion Jenkins
Julien Pritchard	Mahmood Hussain	Rob Pocock
Marcus Bernasconi	Mary Locke	Jamie Tennant
Phil Davis	Ray Goodwin	Saima Ahmed
Shabina Bano	Nicky Brennan	Martin Brooks
Sam Forsyth	Rashad Mahmood	Kath Hartley
Karen McCarthy	Saima Suleman	Marje Bridle
David Barker	Ziaul Islam	Sir Albert Bore
Kerry Jenkins	Diane Donaldson	Narinder Kaur Kooner
Rinkal Shergill	Fred Grindrod	Shehla Moledina
Miranda Perks	Lisa Trickett	Jane Jones
Jilly Bermingham	Brigid Jones	Saqib Khan
Raqeeb Aziz	Shabrana Hussain	John Cotton
Lauren Rainbow	Yvonne Mosquito	Sharon Thompson

Basharat Mahmood	Sybil Spence	Jayne Francis
Des Hughes	Saddak Miah	Shafique Shah
Amar Khan	Jack Deakin	Mohammed Idrees
Majid Mahmood	Penny Wagg	Baber Baz
Roger Harmer	Colin Green	Deborah Harries
Ayoub Khan	Zaker Choudhry	Morriam Jan
Paul Tilsley	Izzy Knowles	

### **Against the Recommendations (0)**

### **Abstentions (0)**

It was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and

189

#### **RESOLVED:-**

That City Council agreed to:

1. Acknowledge and accept the statutory recommendations presented by External Auditors Grant Thornton;
2. Commit to the implementation of these recommendations to safeguard the City's financial sustainability and governance;
3. Accept the proposed action plan, with responsible Officer and Responsible Members, and track delivery of the action plan in line with the deadlines for each recommendation;
4. Consolidate the actions from this report into the improvement plan, as detailed in the Secretary of State's directions;
5. Propose that the Chief Executive responds to the External Auditor with the contents of this report and the proposed action plan as a formal response to the issued recommendations; and,
6. Agree that the Audit Committee receives updates on progress against the recommendations and actions within this report on a regular basis.

The meeting ended at 1945 hours.